Security Council

Fifty-fifth year

Provisional

4203rd meeting

Frday, 29 September 2000, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ouane	(Mali)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Listre
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Heinbecker
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

The situation in East Timor.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

00-66488 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

The President *(spoke in French)*: I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, at this meeting.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in East Timor

The President *(spoke in French)*: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Brazil, Indonesia, Japan, Mozambique and New Zealand, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Wensley (Australia), Mr. Fonsecu (Brazil), Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia), Mr. Satoh (Japan), Mr. Santos (Mozambique) and Mr. Powles (New Zealand) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Representative and Transitional Administrator for East Timor.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Transitional Administrator for East Timor, regarding the situation in East Timor.

I give the floor to the Special Representative and Transitional Administrator for East Timor, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello.

Mr. Vieira de Mello: Since I last briefed the Security Council on 27 June, we have witnessed two opposing developments. On the one hand, there has been a significant deterioration in security and an escalation of violence in Nusa Tenggara Timur — West Timor — most tragically highlighted by the murders in Atambua on 6 September of three staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Security, and the measures required to restore it, will thus prominently feature in this briefing, which I very much regret. I had much rather talk of something else.

On the other hand, and more encouragingly, there has been much progress in the reconstruction being carried out by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in all spheres and in the establishment of those institutions which will prove critical to the viability of the future independent country of East Timor. In my presentation, I shall also be summarizing some of what has been achieved in this regard. In order to enable me to focus on essential developments in this presentation, a note containing other salient information is being distributed, as has been done in the past.

Let me start by referring to security in West Timor. Since 6 September, I have met twice with the Coordinating Minister for Political, Security and Social Affairs of the Government of Indonesia, Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. I stressed, as I had on several occasions prior to this latest crisis, that the militias presented a serious threat not only to East Timor, but also to the very integrity of Indonesia. I repeatedly called not just for their disarming, but also for the arrest of their leaders and their disbanding and relocation.

As a starting point, I believe it is essential to recognize that the root cause of our and Jakarta's problems on Timor island is the militias. Only when this problem has been effectively addressed will we be able to resolve the plight of the remaining East Timorese refugees and focus on developing friendly cooperation between East Timor and Indonesia, to which we are committed. I have pledged our complete

support to Foreign Minister Shihab's comprehensive plan of action to bring about an end to the refugee crisis, but the plan cannot succeed until the militias holding the refugees through threats and misinformation are removed.

And how should we resolve the problem posed by the militias? I must be frank and state that, first of all, the Indonesian authorities have to acknowledge and confront the fact that it is their responsibility to address this threat. We all realize that the militias are not the creation of the administration of President Wahid and that they do not act on instructions from the Government in Jakarta. We sympathize with the dreadful legacy with which the authorities have been left by previous policies towards East Timor.

Nonetheless, the repercussions are likely to be more unrest and loss of innocent lives in West and East Timor unless the root of the problem is recognized and eradicated. Regrettably, I remain sceptical that current activities will achieve this goal. Where resolution and a certain degree of ruthlessness would seem to be required, we are witnessing hesitation and prevarication. As many here are aware, at the request of the Indonesian authorities I sent a small UNTAET delegation to attend a disarmament ceremony in Atambua on Sunday, 24 September, attended by Vice-President Megawati Sukarnoputri, Minister Yudhoyono and many senior Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) and police officers. On the departure of the Vice-President and her delegation, the well-known suspect Eurico Guterres appeared in the midst of the police compound in which the ceremony had been held. He proceeded to incite his followers and several militia members reclaimed some of the very weapons that formed the *raison d'être* of the ceremony, unimpeded by the very large TNI and police presence. Subsequently, he and several hundred of his followers agitated in and outside the station, while my colleagues were hidden under armed protection of the Indonesian police in a room at the police station for their own safety.

Prior to the ceremony, my colleagues were informed by a senior TNI officer that all the required arrests had been made in the case of the 5 September killing of the militia leader Olivio Mendonça, also known as Olivio Moruk — a murder that occurred in the middle of the night in a remote village. The same officer informed my colleagues that there were still no suspects in the case of the killing the following day of the three UNHCR staff members — murders that happened in broad daylight in the presence of 10 Indonesian police officers. Nor, for that matter, has any one of the suspects been arrested for the killing of the United Nations soldiers.

There could hardly be a more eloquent demonstration of Indonesia's current inability to deal effectively with the problem. This is impunity running rampant. What is required is a coordinated, integrated and comprehensive strategy on the part of the Indonesian security forces, together with the necessary will, to hunt down and break up the militias and bring their leaders to justice. And for that we are still waiting.

This self-evident reality — that the militias are the problem — has, I regret to say, on occasion been lost in some of our discussions on the situation in Timor. The problem does not lie with the refugees, as is sometimes said, for they are a product, not a cause, of the crisis, nor is this in some sense a civil war between East Timorese, as some in Indonesia increasingly attempt to paint the problem. There have been no crossings by armed elements from East Timor into the west, as was last week asserted before this Council. The threat faced is that of militias, operating with impunity in West Timor, that are able freely to launch armed interventions across an international boundary into East Timor.

Nor does the solution lie with having joint patrols of United Nations peacekeeping forces and TNI on the border, as has been suggested on numerous occasions by Indonesia, including in this room, because the problem does not lie along the border. The problem is not on the border but, as I have said time and again, deep inside West Timor. We have agreed, however, to coordinate our and TNI patrols on each side of the border.

In his 19 September address to the Security Council, Coordinating Minister Yudhoyono also emphasized that reconciliation was a key requirement to a lasting peace. I obviously agree with this. There has, however, been some suggestion that neither UNTAET nor the National Resistance Council of East Timor (CNRT) has been working sufficiently hard to encourage political dialogue with pro-integrationists.

This is inaccurate: I have made repeated efforts to engage in discussion with the political leadership of the pro-integration umbrella group, Uni Timor Aswain. From the start, the National Consultative Council in

East Timor had three seats reserved for those parties that voted against independence — one more than their percentage of the vote strictly required — but only two of these have ever been filled. Neither I, Xanana Gusmão nor any other senior East Timorese leader has received any reply to our overtures to engage in genuine talks. Further, time and again, we have organized what we call "look and see" visits by pro-autonomy leaders to visit East Timor and assess the situation at first hand. Again, the response to these gestures has been poor, at best.

UNTAET and the CNRT will continue to persevere in efforts for political dialogue and for reconciliation. Nonetheless, the Council will appreciate that a prerequisite to any talks is that our interlocutors issue a public renunciation of the use of violence to pursue political ends and condemn the recent murders of United Nations staff. A line needs to be clearly drawn between those political leaders with whom there can be dialogue and the murderers for whom there must be justice. I have appealed to the Indonesian Government to help us urgently draw this clear distinction between well-meaning pro-autonomy representatives and thugs, such as Eurico Guterres, who should be behind bars instead of being invited to attend meetings with high-level Indonesian officials, as was the case in Denpasar on 14 September.

With regard to the investigations into the September 1999 abuses, the 1 September announcement by Attorney-General Marzuki Darusman of Indonesia of his first list of persons suspected of perpetrating human rights violations in East Timor last year was a very positive step. We are fully supportive of his efforts, and I pass up no opportunity to meet with him when I visit Jakarta. We look forward to appropriate action being taken against all those listed, as well as to the investigation's bringing its focus to bear not just on the perpetrators of the violence, but also on the commanders and architects who designed and ordered the destruction of East Timor in the wake of the popular consultation.

I turn now to the issue of security in East Timor. We believe that there are between 80 to 150 armed militias in up to 10 groups presently operating inside the territory of East Timor. Their aim appears to be to gather information relating to our military component, to establish themselves and to attempt to gain the loyalty of the local population in villages that are believed to have voted for integration. The presence of militias has caused the displacement of over 3,000 persons in recent weeks.

We have launched an operation — called Operation Cobra — in Manufahi, the district with the most significant militia presence. It is aimed at inducing surrender, capturing or eliminating the militias. This is not an easy task, given the suitability of the terrain for insurgency activities and the limited number of specialized troops we can dedicate to the operation. Nevertheless, on 11 September, six militia members surrendered and the active presence of the peacekeeping forces is making it very difficult for the remaining militias to continue to infiltrate and gain a foothold in East Timor. This was evidenced by the killing of one heavily-armed militia member three days ago near the border in the New Zealand battalion area.

Turning now to political developments, the major political event of the reporting period was the CNRT Congress, held in Dili in late August. The Congress focused on the future vision of the national unity body, its relationship with its composite political parties and a range of national policy issues in the economic, social, security and political spheres. It also re-elected Xanana Gusmão as its President and José Ramos-Horta and Mario Carrascalao as its Vice-Presidents.

What also emerged during the Congress, and which has developed in the days since, has been friction between the main party, the East Timor National Liberation Front (FRETILIN), and the smaller Timorese Democratic Union, on the one hand, and the CNRT leadership on the other. The Congress also spawned the birth of a new Timorese party, the Social Democratic Party, headed by Mario Carrascalao. This has led to an intensification of political activity and discord among East Timorese political leaders, which I personally find quite normal, predictable and desirable in the transition to multi-party democracy. There is some sense, however — and we will have to see how the situation develops — that this may lead to a break-up of the umbrella organization and the commencement of party politics proper. I have been attempting to impress upon the FRETILIN leadership that open political party activity is not incompatible with continued membership in the pro-independence coalition.

As to other key developments, since mid-July, as Council members know, we have had a new cabinet structure, with eight cabinet portfolios held by four

Timorese and four international UNTAET staff. The cabinet sets policy and oversees its implementation on behalf of the Transitional Administration. Thus far, it has deliberated on a wide range of policies and, inter alia, agreed to a framework for taxation, a criminal procedure code, a public-buildings reconstruction plan, the reopening of the University of East Timor, a one-hour shift in time zone for East Timor and a plan to develop legislation for the transport sector. It is currently working out procedures to resolve land-ownership and property disputes and is engaged in a comprehensive budget review. The cabinet has also endorsed a comprehensive joint-border arrangement between Indonesia and the Transitional Administration, later signed with Coordinating Minister Yudhoyono — at that time Acting Foreign Minister, since Minister Shihab was here in New York — in Denpasar on 14 September. The cabinet has also approved our negotiating position in formal talks with Australia on the future of Timor Gap petroleum, which are scheduled to commence on 9 October.

In another important step towards "Timorizing" the Administration, last Monday I appointed Timorese District or Deputy District Administrators in all 13 districts of the country. Consultations are also well advanced for the selection, through an independent committee, of 33 members of the new, all-Timorese National Council, which will replace the present National Consultative Council, whom I intend to appoint in the course of the month of October.

I wish to say a word now on the future defence force. Importantly, the cabinet has also expressed its support for establishing a defence force for East Timor following the release of the King's College study, with which members of the Council are familiar. This decision was the result of intensive discussions, both within East Timor and elsewhere, in which there was broad agreement that East Timor required its own defence capacity. The favoured model calls for a force with a professional regular corps of 1,500, supported by 1,500 volunteer reservists, the core of which would be formed by re-trained fighters of the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor, with the remainder to be broadly and professionally recruited. It is important that we proceed swiftly with this plan. The creation of an East Timor defence force will be undertaken within the provisions of resolution 1272 (1999) for capacity-building and the creation of an effective administration.

Building on the King's College study, and with the support of expertise from Australia and Portugal, we are currently working on an elaborated budget and development plan for the future defence force. Once this plan is available as a draft, we intend to convene a meeting in Dili to bring together those States that are likely to want to contribute, either through the provision of training, cash or in-kind contributions, to the development of the defence force. At this meeting we would seek concrete commitments that would, we hope, allow training to be initiated before the end of this year. I should stress that we have presently no resources available for this purpose in the consolidated budget of East Timor and would therefore very much — in fact, entirely — be relying on fresh contributions.

Finally, before I conclude, a word on the political transition and the constitutional process. The major elements of political transition are clear, and I have already alluded to those in my last presentation, in late June. As things currently stand, our plan is to hold national elections in the second half of next year, with a view to establishing the constituent assembly. This assembly will be tasked with drafting the constitution, choosing the members of the new transitional government and serving as an interim legislature. Upon completion of the constitution, the assembly would become the new national assembly of an independent East Timor.

The preconditions required for this exercise are a civic education campaign, approval of a law on political parties and the creation of a legal framework in which to hold elections. We have already begun the process in all these areas. We are now commencing with the training of trainers for a nationwide civic education programme. A draft regulation on the establishment of political parties is being given wide circulation for consultative purposes as I speak.

Let me now conclude. While I believe UNTAET has made demonstrable progress in administering East Timor in a strengthened partnership with the East Timorese leading to what you tasked us to achieve, namely capacity for self-governance, there are growing, serious concerns regarding the security situation, particularly in the western part of the island. East Timor's future security is to a large extent dependent on the stability of its relations across the border with Indonesia. So long as West Timor houses those who wish East Timor nothing but harm and who

have such a large number of refugees as captive constituents, then East Timor's already considerable struggles will be rendered that bit more arduous.

We seek the Council's continued strong support to address this issue in an urgent manner. As we approach the first anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1272 (1999), allow me to reiterate today the invitation I made in late June for the Council to visit East Timor and assess first-hand our achievements as well as our shortcomings. By your presence and concern, you would provide the East Timorese and ourselves in UNTAET with strong encouragement at a particularly critical juncture of the transition we are conducting on your behalf.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Vieira de Mello for his comprehensive briefing and for his kind words addressed to me.

Ms. Soderberg (United States): Welcome to the Secretary-General; it is good to have you here with us today.

I want to first express a warm sense of thanks and welcome to the Special Representative, Sergio Vieira de Mello, first and foremost for being here today, but also for his tireless leadership of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). His work, together, of course, with that of the East Timorese, has firmly established the path toward full independence for East Timor.

I also want to welcome a distinguished, I guess I can say, "citizen" of East Timor. José Ramos-Horta is here with us today.

During this month of your presidency, we have had a number of Council discussions about both East and West Timor. We have expressed horror at the killing of staff of Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). We expressed our strong condemnation of the killing of the United Nations peacekeepers and identified concrete measures to address the underlying factors that led to those killings. We have heard briefings from the Government of Indonesia, and we have decided to send a Security Council mission to discuss the implementation of Council resolution 1319 (2000).

For one year we have been expressing concern about the plight of the East Timorese refugees, and we have been demanding that the militia be disarmed and disbanded. It is equally important, as Special Representative Vieira de Mello suggested in his briefing and as a range of my Government's officials have stressed, that those militia leaders who have committed criminal acts be investigated and put in jail — not allowed to attend ceremonies, but arrested immediately so that they can stop being a threat.

There has to be a credible and comprehensive move against the militia leaders in all of the refugee camps. This is not a question of persuasion; it is a question of justice. The United States notes the steps being taken by the Government of Indonesia that we have been briefed on, but we remain deeply concerned that the root causes of the violence remain unaddressed. Persuasive means are not working. We are all concerned by reports that some of the weapons turned over during the persuasive stage of the Government's campaign against the militias are already back in militia hands.

We are equally concerned by the less-than-helpful comments from some Indonesian officials, referring today to the historic ties between the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) and the militia and saying that coercive measures would not be taken. We are further concerned that the police and TNI sweep of the nine refugee camps yesterday and today reportedly yielded something less than 20 weapons. Removing weapons from the camps is vital, but ultimately the key will be the disbanding of the militias and the arrest of its leaders. Only such steps will lead to the goal that we all seek: the cessation of violence — the violence against Indonesian citizens as well as the violence against aid workers and particularly our colleagues within the United Nations system.

It is important to understand that there will be no security in West Timor until the militias are part of the past. It is our message to the Indonesian Government that it is in their interest to take these steps, and we want to help them achieve those goals.

The United States adamantly supports Madam Ogata's policy that the UNHCR should not return to West Timor until the security situation is clearly stable. The Government of Indonesia has spoken about a comprehensive refugee plan to be undertaken in coordination with the international community. While the United States stands ready to contribute, security guarantees are essential and are an urgent precursor to implementing such a programme. It is important to stress that Indonesia is responsible for the care and

security of those refugees in the interim, and it is time to hear the details of the refugee return plan.

We welcome Foreign Minister Shihab's plan to return to the Security Council and to New York on 11 and 12 October to brief us on the progress towards implementing Security Council resolution 1319 (2000). We are glad that during that visit Mr. Shihab will set a date for the Security Council mission to visit Indonesia, as we also intend to visit East Timor. I emphasize again that this mission is intended to support the Government's effort to implement our resolutions.

Currently, there is an important donor meeting of the Consultative Group on Indonesia, scheduled for just a week after Foreign Minister Shihab's visit. The United States and the international community's attitude towards the timing and substance of that meeting will certainly be influenced by the actions of the Government of Indonesia in the next couple of weeks.

Sergio Vieira de Mello's briefing reminds us of the importance of the other half of this story: the situation in East Timor. We need to pay attention to the work of UNTAET and ensure that we are supporting it in all of its important tasks. We particularly welcome the news that the transitional cabinet, made up of United Nations and East Timorese officials, is working effectively. This is not only of vital importance for East Timor; it is also a remarkable model for future United Nations cooperation.

The United States supports UNTAET's aggressive sweeps against militias who have re-entered East Timor combined with continued efforts at national reconciliation. We agree that a complete renunciation of violence is a critical element of reconciliation efforts. The formula of success is straightforward: zero tolerance for violence combined with a high level of openness towards legitimate differences in political views and transparent accountability in a credible court, national or international, for serious crimes.

It is unconscionable that no one — not one person — has been arrested and held for the deaths of the five United Nations workers, three of our colleagues from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and two of our peacekeeper colleagues. We owe it to their families to ensure that justice is achieved.

Lastly, it is clear that stability is an essential factor as East Timor and the United Nations move to meet the benchmarks that Mr. Vieira de Mello described in our last briefing, on time and in peace.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the strong support of the United States — and I think of the whole Council — for Mr. Vieira de Mello and his colleagues in their work, and through Mr. Vieira de Mello the wide range of United Nations staff and East Timorese who are working towards that target. He is making the United Nations and all of its systems very proud, and I thank him.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): I fully associate the United Kingdom with the later intervention by France in its capacity as Presidency of the European Union, and Ambassador Levitte will express, and I warmly support, a very sincere tribute to the work of the Special Representative and the whole team of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) on the ground, which continues to do marvelous work in very difficult circumstances. The United Kingdom is fully in support of what they are doing.

I just want to make one or two extra points. We think that UNTAET and the East Timorese leadership continue to make steady progress towards establishing a viable State in East Timor, but it is quite clear where the main threat to their efforts is coming from, and Sergio Vieira de Mello's report has graphically illustrated both the unresolved fate of tens of thousands of the compatriots of the East Timorese in West Timor and the dangers in the security situation there. The Indonesian Government has told us more than once that they are disarming the militias and interviewing suspects for the Atambua murders; and yet, as Mr. Vieira de Mello has pointed out, the comprehensive plan of action — and I quote him — "cannot succeed until the militias holding the refugees through threats and misinformation are removed." (*supra.*) He has repeatedly called not just for the disarming of the militias, but also for the arrest of their leaders and their disbanding and relocation. I think it is time for the Security Council to express very explicitly our agreement with the Special Representative that these are benchmarks we cannot do without.

We have noted the Indonesian Government's commitment to brief the Security Council regularly over compliance with Security Council resolution 1319

(2000), but I have to say again that the proposed date of 12 October for the Foreign Minister to come to New York is too late for us to check the action being taken against these benchmarks — against the picture that Mr. Vieira de Mello has depicted for us. We continue to believe that we have to work in partnership with the Indonesian Government and that the Security Council mission to help verify for international credibility what is happening in West Timor is necessary at an early date. Yet, as the Special Representative has said this afternoon, we are still waiting.

I think it is also important that we go to East Timor at the Special Representative of the Secretary-General's invitation for the reasons he gives, not least to give support to what the United Nations administrative team is doing and what the incipient authorities of East Timor are doing to establish their own community. These events have reinforced the United Kingdom's view that the international community has to get on with considering East Timor's defence needs.

The study that has been done by the United Kingdom's King's College has made a number of proposals, and we entirely agree with the Special Representative that preparatory work must now swiftly begin. The United Kingdom will do what it can to contribute to the follow-up work, and we look forward to the proposed meeting in Dili.

Finally, I, too, should like to note that the United Kingdom is certainly included in the part of the international community that is ready to help Indonesia with all of these problems, but we would find it hard to do so — and this is a statement of fact, not a threat — at the forthcoming meeting of the Consultative Group in Tokyo in mid-October if there is no real progress in West Timor. At the most, between now and 12 October, there may be time to show that real progress has begun, but we do not believe that it has yet begun.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): Allow me to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for scheduling yet another public meeting on the situation in East Timor. We are particularly happy to have with us once again Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We are grateful to him for the informative and useful briefing on the latest developments. I would like to add that we are happy to see Mr. José Ramos-Horta among us today.

We always find the opportunity to meet and exchange views on East Timor very useful. The reason for this is that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has a distinctive character. While most of the United Nations missions are passing through difficult stages, we look up to UNTAET as one which, despite known constraints and the enormity of the task, has been able to achieve a lot. We once again commend Mr. Vieira de Mello for his leadership and perseverance.

We believe the United Nations and all the Member States have a great stake in the success of UNTAET. The need to remind us about this lies in the fact that the period since Mr. Vieira de Mello's last visit to the Council has been a difficult one, both for UNTAET and for the Council. Last June we were looking ahead, speaking about the issues relating to the independence of East Timor, the launching of consultations for developing a constitution, security requirements and capacity-building in vital areas. There also had been with us for some time the thought of whether the military component of UNTAET could be gradually reduced.

We were, of course, quite concerned by the continuing violence and intimidation perpetrated by the armed militia against the refugees and aid workers and incidents of cross border incursions, all of which, cumulatively, translated into a halting of the repatriation process.

More than all that, today we are confronted with a problem of a larger dimension. The burning down of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)in Atambua and the killing of three of its personnel have radically changed the situation in West Timor, jeopardizing, as never before, the safety and security of the refugees and the prospects for their repatriation to East Timor. The Council took serious note of this and unanimously adopted resolution 1319 (2000).

Today we are talking about the violent mindset of a group of people who have crossed all limits of humane behaviour. This raises legitimate questions about our commitment to protecting the innocent, justice, peace and security. The perpetrators of these violent acts cannot be allowed to derail the positive progress made by UNTAET in East Timor.

The Council is resolute in condemning the outrageous and contemptible acts committed by the

armed militia against the United Nations personnel. Such crimes should not go unpunished, as that, in our view, would weaken the very basis of relations between the United Nations and its Member States.

We believe that the Government of Indonesia is conscious of its responsibility in this matter. We see this reflected in President Wahid's recent pronouncements. We welcome his resolve to take steps in the context of the implementation of resolution 1319 (2000). Special Envoy Yudhoyono's meeting with the Council, the four-point plan that he elaborated before the Council and the steps that have since been taken by the Government demonstrate that resolve. We also recognize the need for high visibility results of these steps.

We are very much concerned at the plight of the refugees still living in camps in West Timor, unprotected, insecure and under the looming threat of further violence and penury. With the complete withdrawal of the international aid agencies, they are like a ticking humanitarian time bomb. We understand that UNHCR cannot return to West Timor until there is a credible security guarantee. In this situation, the Government of Indonesia needs to act quickly and firmly to be able to provide the security, sooner rather than later. In the interim, the refugees must be fed, sheltered and protected.

We feel strongly the need to maintain a line of communication between the Council and the Government of Indonesia. The Council should be taken into confidence and consulted. Its role consists, not in undermining the Government, which has the task of implementing resolution 1319 (2000), but in assisting and advising the Government. An eventual Council mission should be viewed in that context, as a useful instrument that could bring positive opportunity and support for the Government. There is no scope for a role any different. In this regard, we look forward to the early October visit to New York by Foreign Minister Shihab, or a high-level special envoy of the Indonesian Government if the Minister is not available.

The President *(spoke in French)*: I thank the representative of Bangladesh for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) *(spoke in from Spanish)*: I congratulate you, Mr. President, on organizing this open debate, the culmination of your active and skilful presidency this month.

I first thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for the comprehensive information he has provided this afternoon. His presentation clearly shows the magnitude of the excellent work done by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) over the past few months. I particularly highlight the initiatives taken to make sure that the Timorese increasingly shoulder the responsibility of the day to day running of their affairs. The institutions set up by UNTAET, in consultation with representatives of the local population, will be very useful, bringing an increasing degree of autonomy to East Timor, leading to independence. We trust that these and other measures that Mr. Vieira de Mello has told us about will lay the foundations for elections in the middle of next year in preparation for East Timor's accession to full independence.

Turning to another matter, I must express our concern about the recent violence in East Timor and particularly the attacks on United Nations forces. I congratulate UNTAET on having responded decisively. In future, in the context of the robust mandate given by the Council, the United Nations forces should take all the measures at their disposal to defend themselves against any hostile act by the militias.

I would also like to restate the Argentine Government's strong condemnation of the brutal murder of staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on 6 September in Atambua. As the Council knows, my country attaches the greatest importance to the protection of United Nations personnel and associated staff. We are convinced that States must guarantee the security and personal integrity conditions needed for such personnel to do their duty. Brutal events such as those in Atambua cannot be tolerated. They must be punished immediately and firmly.

In this connection, it is clear that the current problems in West Timor spring from two closely related and mutually reinforcing questions: the presence of refugees and the activity of the militias. On previous occasions we have said that measures must be taken immediately so that refugees wishing to do so may return to East Timor, and that those remaining should be resettled elsewhere on Indonesian territory. Today we add a request that the refugee camps in West Timor be dismantled as soon as possible, thus ending a situation that has lasted for over a year. At the same

time, the militias must be truly disbanded, not simply disarmed.

On 19 September the Coordinating Minister for Political, Social and Security Affairs of the Government of Indonesia, Mr. Susilo Yudhoyono, informed the Council about some of the initiatives taken by the Indonesian Government in connection with the two matters I have just mentioned. We have heard that the disarming of the militias has indeed started but has encountered some difficulties. We support all the efforts made by Indonesia to disarm the militias, as a preliminary step to their being disbanded. We hope that this can take place on the basis of persuasion, but if that is not possible it is incumbent upon Indonesia to use force. No effort must be spared to complete this process in the shortest possible time. We believe that the Indonesian Government should be given whatever assistance it needs to bring this about.

In the light of what I have said, we place great hopes in the visit of Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Mr. Shihab to New York on 11 and 12 October, when we hope to be able to discuss with him every aspect of the implementation of resolution 1319 (2000) and of deciding a date and mandate for a mission to be sent by the Council to Indonesia to study progress in implementing the resolution and to support and assist the Government of Indonesia in bringing about full compliance with it.

Finally, I join previous speakers in conveying to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and the staff of UNTAET the gratitude and appreciation of the Argentine Government for their unfailing courage, dedication and perseverance.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: I thank the representative of Argentina for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Theron (Namibia): I wish to thank Mr. Vieira de Mello for travelling to New York to brief us today. His briefing is certainly timely because of the important considerations by this Council following the recent tragic events in West Timor, his subsequent talks with the Indonesian authorities and the Council's meeting with the Special Envoy of President Wahid. Furthermore, the Council will soon have a follow-up meeting with Foreign Minister Shihab. Our exchanges today have provided a clearer idea of the situation on the ground.

I wish to say a few words on the work of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). My delegation remains satisfied with the progress by UNTAET in the execution of its mandate. We note the continuing positive developments in East Timor's administration process. The continuing high priority that is given to efforts towards reconciliation is commendable. My delegation also disagrees with those that allege that nothing is being done in this regard. Similarly the further increase in economic activities is encouraging since it will have a vital role in the future prosperity of the East Timorese.

UNTAET should be commended for acting firmly against militia incursions from West Timor, as in the case of the recent killing of a militia member in a firefight. Increased militia activities have provided more urgency for the establishment of an East Timorese national defence force, and we welcome the Cabinet decision in this regard. However, it is our hope that the current actions by the Indonesian Government to disarm the militias in West Timor will normalize the situation. We call on the Indonesian authorities to leave no stone unturned in this effort, as well as in disbanding the militias.

With regard to the situation of the camps in West Timor, my delegation remains concerned about the plight of the refugees. We also call on the Government of Indonesia to provide them with all the necessary humanitarian assistance in the absence of the United Nations agencies. We welcome the efforts made by the Government to provide safety to the refugees. It is however, important, that all the provisions of Security Council resolution 1319 (2000) be fully implemented. In this regard, those responsible for the brutal murders of United Nations staff on 6 September should be brought to justice swiftly.

We know that the return of refugees has been extremely slow. However, we would appreciate it if Mr. Vieira de Mello could elaborate a little more on UNTAET's plans in the event of a rapid and large-scale return of refugees to East Timor.

In conclusion, my delegation looks forward to the meeting with Foreign Minister Shihab. I would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate our strong support for Mr. Vieira de Mello and his staff.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for calling this public meeting to consider once again the question of East Timor.

The situation is West Timor remains a cause for great concern. United Nations personnel have been attacked and murdered. United Nations officials present at the weapons turnover ceremony were subjected once again to threats and intimidation. The Chinese delegation strongly condemns the incidents of violence against United Nations personnel that occurred in West Timor. We demand that the perpetrators be brought to justice.

The Chinese delegation notes that the Indonesian Government has taken serious, effective measures. It has collected a large number of weapons and has acted to restrain the militias. All these measures have demonstrated the earnest desire of the Indonesian Government to resolve the situation there. We are convinced that the Indonesian Government has the ability to keep the situation under control. Of course, the process of collecting weapons is not without problems, some of which are quite serious. We look to the Indonesian Government to earnestly carry out its commitment to restore stability and order in West Timor, to ensure that violence against United Nations personnel will not happen again and to provide security and safety to the refugee camps in order to pave the way for an early return of United Nations agencies and personnel and to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees, who are in dire need.

Resolving the militia question is a daunting task. For quite some time, the Security Council has been making repeated calls, but so far this issue has not been resolved in a satisfactory manner. Now is the time for a real solution. We look to the Indonesian Government to take genuinely forceful measures. At the same time, we believe the international community should support the Indonesian Government and encourage it to take action, and should refrain from undermining the authority of the Indonesian Government and its ability to keep the situation under control. Particular care should be taken to avoid a course of action that is likely to lead to a confrontation between the United Nations and Indonesia, which would not be well received by the Indonesian people and would have a profoundly adverse impact on the future work of United Nations personnel in Indonesia.

The question of the refugees remaining in West Timor is a complex one that involves many factors. It needs to be addressed in a comprehensive and integrated manner. We hope that the Indonesian Government will continue to extend wide-ranging cooperation with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor. At the same time, the international community should provide the necessary assistance in this regard.

Lastly, we wish to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Vieira de Mello, for his comprehensive briefing. We highly commend and fully support the work of Mr. Vieira de Mello and his staff. We thank them for doing great work in a very dangerous and difficult situation.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): I join other speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for calling this meeting, in welcoming Mr. Vieira de Mello and in thanking him for his informative briefing.

I have noted the strong emphasis in his statement on the security situation, especially in West Timor, and if I do not dwell on it extensively on my part it is because the matter will be covered in the statement to be made later in this debate by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union, to which my delegation subscribes. Let me just say that we are dismayed at the latest information we have received on the so-called crackdown against militia groups in West Timor. We agree with Mr. Vieira de Mello that Foreign Minister Shihab's plan of action cannot succeed until the militias holding the refugees through threats and misinformation are removed.

Mr. Vieira de Mello has not been here to brief us for about three months, so it is high time for us to commend him once again for the tremendous work done by him and his international staff in rebuilding East Timor from scratch.

At the same time, the involvement of the East Timorese remains essential. Is Mr. Vieira de Mello of the opinion that progress in involving the East Timorese is satisfactory? Or maybe I should rephrase this. Is he of the opinion that the East Timorese themselves feel that this is the case? In other words, is their sense of ownership growing?

Our common interest in seeing East Timor develop into a democratic State based on the rule of law is not confined to civilian institutions, but must also include its future armed forces. We are therefore grateful for all the information Mr. Vieira de Mello has supplied with regard to the future defence force. In the past, my delegation has repeatedly expressed its interest in this issue, and I would like to explain briefly why we consider this so important. The negative developments in West Timor underscore the need for East Timor to have the military capacity to defend itself as far as its resources will allow. At the same time, appropriate institutional democratic checks and balances need to be established. Close United Nations involvement will provide the opportunity to ensure that an East Timorese force conforms to the standards of civilian oversight, democratic accountability and international human rights norms and standards.

We cannot assume that this will happen by itself. United Nations guidance is needed to foster a culture of commitment to democracy and the rule of law in the future armed forces, inter alia, through programmes of civic and human rights education. Also, the armed forces should not engage in activities that fall outside the ambit of their tasks as the defenders of East Timorese sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The establishment of such a force is necessary because the international community cannot indefinitely provide for the security of East Timor. However, it will be some time — perhaps a few years — before such a force will be ready. While everything possible should be done to enable East Timor to fend for itself as soon as possible, in the meantime the international community should continue to provide for its security, in the form of either a United Nations force or a multilateral force, preferably with regional participation.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We associate ourselves with the words of gratitude addressed to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello for his informative and most useful briefing. This time, unfortunately, our customary consideration of the work of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) is taking place against the backdrop of a deteriorating situation in that area. Here I am referring not only to the recent incidents around the refugee camps in West Timor, but also to instances of militias becoming more active in the eastern part of the island as well. We are particularly concerned at news reports dated 26 September indicating that militia members were armed with automatic weapons and were wearing Indonesian uniforms. We understand that there might be a number of explanations of how the militias acquired such equipment, but in our view this simply highlights the need for the Indonesian authorities to take decisive action to put an end to the criminal activities of the militias.

No less disquieting is the fact that, while militia members were armed with automatic weapons, most of the arms they have turned in have been home-made. In that connection, we would like reliable information about how the weapons handover is being conducted, and about what assessments the Secretariat is relying on.

I wish also to stress that, as far as we are concerned, the efforts of the Indonesian authorities with a view to normalizing the situation in West Timor have not gone unnoticed. We hope that those steps will have a real impact in the very near future. We note that an Indonesian Ministry for Foreign Affairs press release dated 25 September has reaffirmed the Indonesian Government's readiness work with the Security Council to establish a plan and a timetable for a visit to Indonesia by a Council delegation.

I cannot fail to note in conclusion that, as in the past, we highly commend the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor for its work, and Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello for his able leadership. We hope that the next time we consider the question of East Timor it will be in a more favourable atmosphere.

As this is the last meeting of the Security Council for the month of September, Sir, I wish on behalf of Ambassador Lavrov and of the entire Russian delegation to thank you most warmly for your able and very tactful guidance of the work of the Council as its President.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Heinbecker (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by conveying Canada's condolences to the families of the three staff members

of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) who were slain on 6 September at Atambua, West Timor. Their murders, and the deaths of the as yet unknown number of refugees they were working to assist, are profoundly disturbing to Canada. They strengthen our resolve to see the state of terror in which such refugees live brought to an end.

(*spoke in English*)

We are distressed at the situation in West Timor, both for the people concerned and because of the potential of that situation to further undermine the process of reconstruction in East Timor. We very much welcome the insights offered by Mr. Vieira de Mello on this issue. One year has passed since the international community undertook to end the suffering that criminal militias visited on the East Timorese for simply exercising their right to self-determination. But more than 100,000 of the 250,000 who fled the violence or who were forcibly removed still remain in refugee camps in West Timor. They have yet to experience the freedom from fear and freedom from harm that is their right under international law. Until they can return voluntarily and safely to East Timor or can resettle elsewhere, there will be no closure on this issue. Nor, indeed, will the relationship between East Timor and Indonesia be placed on a proper and normal footing. I have taken particular note of Mr. Vieira de Mello's comment that the militias present

> "a serious threat not only to East Timor, but also to the integrity of Indonesia itself". (*supra*)

For those reasons, the disbanding of the militias and the safety of the 100,000 refugees in West Timor and of the international personnel assisting them must be uppermost in the minds of the Government of Indonesia, as it equally must be uppermost in our own minds. It is important that the Government of Indonesia work closely with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and with the UNHCR. This is particularly necessary at the planning stage of any resettlement effort, to ensure that refugees are not simply relocated to an equally hazardous region or exposed to unreasonable hardship or danger along the way.

It is appropriate at this time, and in the light of recent events, to recall the commitment of the Government of Indonesia to ensure the safety of refugees and humanitarian workers. That commitment has been freely entered into, and has been frequently reiterated. We take note of the letter dated 25 September from the Permanent Representative of Indonesia addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2000/899). We acknowledge that the Indonesian Government has inherited, as Mr. Vieira de Mello has put it, a dreadful legacy. It is therefore important that the Government succeed in securing domestic support to carry out the action required.

And what is necessary to bring an end to militia violence is immediate action. A priority task in that regard is stopping cross-border incursions into East Timor, which in the past few months have caused the death and wounding of UNTAET personnel and of members of the civilian population. Nothing less than the complete disarmament and disbanding of the militias and the arrest and prosecution of the perpetrators of human rights and humanitarian law violations will do. We note that the Indonesian Government and army have begun a two-phase operation aimed at disarming the criminal elements responsible for the recent violence against refugees and aid personnel. At the same time, the fact that no one is even under arrest for the crimes committed at Atambua, crimes that Mr. Vieira de Mello observes were committed in the presence of 10 Indonesian police officers, is unacceptable. Similarly, suggestions by members of the Indonesian Government — suggestions that do not appear to have been officially contradicted — that the recent murders were somehow committed by foreign agents or that the attacks were somehow inevitable, caused by the refugees' presence itself, are, frankly, very worrisome. For those reasons, we emphasize the need for neutral international monitoring of the disarmament process. That way we can all verify whether the militias have been disarmed and disbanded. We will also be able to testify that the efforts of the Indonesian Government are indeed an effective response to the request for action in Security Council resolution 1319 (2000).

Indonesia has taken important steps in investigating the violence that followed the referendum in August 1999. That progress could be lost and Indonesia's reputation could suffer if crime now goes unpunished. We urge the Government of Indonesia to take whatever steps are necessary to arrest and prosecute those responsible for the recent attacks against refugees and international workers.

Finally, we reiterate our call for the Government of Indonesia to work with us on the visit to the region

by a delegation of the Security Council. The Government of Indonesia and the Security Council would both benefit from full and frank dialogue on the best means to resolve the refugee issue and to begin in earnest the process of reconstruction in East Timor.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): My delegation, too, would like to thank Mr. Vieira de Mello for his comprehensive briefing. We are all aware of the high quality of the work undertaken and the commendable efforts made by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) — which has made progress and obtained concrete results in East Timor — as well as by the Indonesian Government and the humanitarian organizations that have also participated in stabilizing the situation and making the United Nations mission in East Timor a success.

It is clear that the instability of the situation in that region is largely due to the thorny problem of the return of the refugees, which is both a cause and a consequence of the precarious humanitarian situation, unemployment and the presence of uncontrolled militias. These are all aspects that impede a swift and definitive resolution of the problem.

The difficult situation of some hundred thousand refugees is of concern, and is in danger of worsening as a result of the absence of humanitarian assistance from humanitarian organizations because of the dangerous conditions under which they carry out their work. The security aspect is of concern to the Council. As Mr. Vieira de Mello stressed, the activities of the uncontrolled militias and the reprehensible incidents that have occurred recently cast into doubt all of the efforts undertaken in the past year by UNTAET and the Indonesian Government.

In this respect, we encourage Indonesia with regard to both the position it adopted towards the militias and its commitment to put an end to their activities. We believe that the disarmament process begun by the Indonesian Government constitutes a very important stage in the resolution of this problem. This stage will surely be followed by other initiatives that the Indonesian Government will not fail to undertake, given the positive attitude shown by the Indonesian side, which is aware of the importance of maintaining ongoing contacts with the Security Council. The next visit of Minister Shihab is certainly part of this approach.

Security should also be strengthened on both sides of the border in order to minimize the possibility of incursions by the militias. The conclusion on 14 September of an agreement between the Indonesian Government and UNTAET, creating a Joint Border Committee, was encouraging.

We believe that the easing of the security situation would encourage the promotion of economic activities and have a positive impact on the internal situation of the country. Indeed, the economic aspect is one of the greatest priorities to which special attention should be given by the international community. The post-conflict period and its humanitarian and economic requirements will call for intensive efforts so that lasting peace can be established.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): Thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open briefing on East Timor. We are pleased to welcome Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello back to the Council and are grateful for his extremely useful briefing. We are also pleased to see Mr. Ramos-Horta in the Council today.

Three months after the Council last heard from Mr. Vieira de Mello, the situation pertaining to the militias has not improved, and there are disturbing reports of militia incidents in both East and West Timor. The slaying of three Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) staff on 6 September in Atambua has highlighted the continuing instability in and around the refugee camps in West Timor. The Council and the international community are justifiably outraged by the fact that humanitarian workers have become targets of threats, intimidation and murder as they undertake to carry out their humanitarian tasks. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malaysia recently made a statement about that incident in this Council.

These out-of-control militiamen in West Timor are a threat, not only to peace and security in West Timor, but also to East Timor's own journey towards independence. At the same time, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) continues to remain at considerable risk, despite the improvements in the overall situation since its establishment. It is imperative that these militiamen be effectively disarmed and the refugees protected from their acts of intimidation.

Recently, the Council listened to Minister Yudhoyono, the Special Envoy of the President of

Indonesia, on the measures that have been and are being taken by the Indonesian authorities to manage the situation. We believe that Indonesia will make good on its promise to bring the situation under control. This may take time, but, according to the statements made by Council members today, time may not by on Indonesia's side.

Like others, Malaysia looks forward to the outcome of the investigation into the murder of the three UNHCR personnel, as was assured in President Wahid's letter of 7 September to the Secretary-General. We trust that the Government of Indonesia will get to the bottom of the incident in Atambua and will take firm measures against those found guilty. We will have the opportunity to raise these and other issues when Minister Shihab meets with the Council soon.

I agree with the representative of China that we should be understanding and supportive of the Indonesian Government, and not take a confrontational stance, as that would be counterproductive to our efforts. We should regard Indonesia as a partner with its own problems and constraints, not as an adversary, which it is not.

Clearly, in the light of the still-precarious security situation, the earlier plan to downsize UNTAET will have to be considered with great circumspection until we are sure that the militias no longer pose a serious threat. I would appreciate it if Mr. Vieira de Mello would share his own thoughts on this.

We would like to pay tribute to UNTAET for its continuing work in East Timor and commend the Special Representative and his team for the close working relationship they have forged with the East Timorese leadership in the effective administration of the territory. We have heard this afternoon that UNTAET continues to make considerable progress on several fronts in the implementation of its mandate. Of particular importance is the decision of the National Consultative Council, last week, to approve a regulation on transitional rules of criminal procedures for East Timor, following months of consultation, including the holding of two public hearings in August and September.

Malaysia also welcomes the signing, in Denpasar on 15 September 2000, of a document establishing a Joint Border Committee, consisting of civilian representatives from UNTAET and the Government of Indonesia. Based on our own experience with similar arrangements with our neighbours, we are confident that this mechanism will help boost security along the border between East and West Timor. We encourage UNTAET to forge other bilateral arrangements and mechanisms within East Timor and its neighbour, Indonesia, which would provide a strong and solid foundation for a constructive and harmonious relationship between the two neighbours.

We also note other measures taken by UNTAET in other sectors, such as the registration of cars and other vehicles and procedures for land ownership and property disputes, among others. These measures represent further concrete steps towards nationhood.

My delegation welcomes the recent decision of the transitional Cabinet of East Timor on the establishment of a national defence force based on option III of the independent study by King's College released last month. The option calls for a defence force built upon a base of members of the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (FALINTIL) — retrained members — with a professional regular corps of 1,500 volunteer reservists.

The briefing given to us by Mr. Vieira de Mello has clearly underlined the considerable progress made thus far. But many challenges remain which will require the continued strong support of the international community and the United Nations, both during the period leading up to independence and beyond. As a neighbour, Malaysia remains ready to contribute to that process, within its capability to do so.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Malaysia for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting of the Security Council on this important agenda item. My delegation welcomes Mr. Vieira de Mello's participation in today's meeting. We are grateful to him for his comprehensive briefing, which has provided us with an objective and, I must say, regrettable picture of the situation in the region.

A simple comparison with the situation that prevailed in the region only a few months ago makes it clear that, unfortunately, there has been a considerable deterioration in the security situation. The numerous acts of violence that have taken place in West Timor have become a challenge to the efforts of the United

Nations. Resumed militia activities have also been reported from East Timor.

The timely and decisive steps taken by the Security Council, including the adoption of its resolution 1319 (2000), have demonstrated its readiness to stop the escalation of violence in the region. We all are concerned about these acts of violence, and we condemn them. We all wish to see the situation in the region return to normal.

In this context, we are pleased to note that the plan of action adopted by the Indonesian Government rests on a responsible, rational, results-oriented approach aimed at ensuring the safety and security of United Nations personnel, humanitarian workers and refugees.

However, greater efforts should be made by the Indonesian Government to stabilize the situation, and it should certainly take a more cooperative approach towards the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

In this context, the task of putting an end to the militias' activities and disarming and disbanding them should be given top priority. We welcome the fact that the disarmament process is under way. It is quite important to ensure its prompt completion.

My delegation also strongly supports the suggestion put forward by Mr. Vieira de Mello that all those responsible for the terrible crimes committed in West and East Timor be brought to justice.

We strongly agree with a number of previous speakers that continued success in the areas that constitute the major task of UNTAET, such as the return of refugees, reconciliation and the stable development of East Timor, will depend largely on the maintenance of a secure environment. We believe that sending a Security Council mission to the region is the best way to support the efforts of the Indonesian Government to this end.

We attach a great deal of importance to the security situation, and, as such, we would like to commend the activities of UNTAET as well as pay tribute personally to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We believe that these activities are strategically coherent, not only in terms of responding to the challenges posed by recent events but also in the context of a long-term perspective of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1272 (1999).

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): My delegation joins previous speakers in welcoming the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, and in thanking him for his comprehensive briefing on developments in East Timor.

Since the last briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, we have faced the tragic deaths of peacekeepers as well as the brutal murder of staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in West Timor. We again call for the perpetrators of those murders to be brought to justice.

The murder of United Nations staff strikes at the heart of the work of this Organization, for without staff willing to leave their homes and families to venture out to assist those in need, there will be little work for this Organization to do. My delegation therefore reiterates its call for the disarmament of the militias in West Timor by the Government of Indonesia.

We were deeply disappointed to learn of the paltry yield of weapons in the just-completed disarmament exercise and the continued hostile actions of the militias and their supporters. We recall the briefing given by Special Envoy Minister Yudhoyono, and we expect to receive further information from the Indonesian Government about the disarmament process.

We also continue to believe that a mission by the Security Council, with the cooperation and support of the Indonesian Government, will yield positive results, because it will send a direct signal to the militias and those who seek to harm United Nations personnel that the international community has not turned a blind eye.

The recent events in West Timor have also raised concern about the fate of the East Timorese refugees since the withdrawal of the humanitarian agencies from the refugee camps. The safe passage of refugees to their places of origin is critical, and with the pattern of recent events this may prove difficult in the face of threats, harassment and intimidation by the militias. We support the view expressed by the Special Representative that only when the problem of militias has been effectively addressed will the plight of the East Timorese refugees be resolved.

We recognize that the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) is putting contingency planning arrangements in place, and we welcome the establishment of a joint operations centre by the UNHCR in Dili.

But while the security situation in East Timor is itself generally calm, the recent killing of an armed militiaman near the border points to continued efforts to infiltrate East Timor. In this context, we have noted the plans announced by the Cabinet for the creation of an East Timor defence force.

My delegation would not like to see reversals of any of the gains made in the reconstruction of East Timor. Progress has been incremental, but in examining the events of the past year we must commend UNTAET for the achievements made in involving the people of East Timor in the creation and building of institutions of governance and public administration. We note, however, that there continues to be an acute shortage of qualified, experienced personnel in both the public and private sectors and that many well-qualified East Timorese remain in exile and have been slow to return.

My delegation therefore welcomes the decision to develop a Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) programme with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations volunteers.

We would also wish to highlight another area of continued concern, specifically the high unemployment rate despite the ongoing efforts to create short-term, quick-impact projects.

In conclusion my delegation wishes to again commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the men and women of UNTAET for their dedicated and dynamic service.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Mali.

I would like at the outset to associate the Mali delegation with the thanks addressed to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and all his team for the excellent work they have done — under extremely difficult conditions — since the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

I would next like to make a few short comments on the principal questions raised in the typically detailed and lucid briefing made by Mr. Vieira de Mello — a briefing for which I thank him.

First, I would like to emphasize that, like others, we continue to be greatly concerned by the security situation in which, as Mr. Vieira de Mello put it, there has been a tragic deterioration. Mali strongly condemns all the acts of violence, in particular those that occurred in Atambua. We urge the Indonesian Government to take all the necessary measures to ensure security and prevent such acts from recurring.

As regards the situation of the refugees, I would like to emphasize the necessity of quickly coming to a resolution. From this point of view we believe it essential that the Indonesian Government cooperate with UNTAET and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees both in the camps and on the routes of return.

As concerns the transition process, we must call attention to the need to involve the Timorese as soon as possible. We are pleased by the steps taken in this regard and encourage the international community to provide the necessary support for the successful organization of the national elections planned for the second half of 2001 and for the continuation of the efforts that have allowed UNTAET to achieve significant progress in building a democratic and stable State in East Timor.

I resume my function as President of the Council.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset I congratulate you, Sir, for completing your month on an issue of particular interest to us and which has allowed us to hear from our friend Sergio Vieira de Mello and to have in the Chamber with us our friend José Ramos-Horta.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this statement.

On behalf of the European Union, I would like to once again most warmly welcome Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and to thank him for his briefing. We appreciate the remarkable work that has already been done by the

Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his entire team, and their determination to fulfil as effectively as possible the mandate of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). The European Union reaffirms its solidarity with the people of East Timor and its support for UNTAET in its efforts to meet one of the United Nations greatest challenges: to lead East Timor within a limited timeframe, on the path to democracy and to allow this country to establish secure relations with all its neighbours.

The European Union commends in particular the work done by UNTAET in four fields.

The first is the preservation of public order. Notwithstanding the difficulties encountered at the border with West Timor — about which I will have more to say — UNTAET has done excellent work in the effort to preserve public order in Timor. The European Union encourages UNTAET to pursue the dialogue with the local community and with the political and religious leaders so as to better ensure the promotion of the values of tolerance.

The second field is reconstruction. The European Union is pleased by the efforts UNTAET and the World Bank have made to accelerate the disbursement of specially earmarked funds of the World Bank and thus to remedy the problems encountered at the beginning of the year. The establishment of a consolidated overall budget for the budget year 2000-2001 — which budget was approved at the Lisbon conference last June — constitutes a significant step forward in this regard. The identification and enhancement of the reconstruction capacities of the East Timorese remain essential objectives.

The third field is the establishment of the East Timorese administration. The European Union takes note with satisfaction of the training programme for civil servants that has been implemented by UNTAET and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). As a result, the number of East Timorese in the administration has noticeably increased during the last few months. The European Union encourages UNTAET to accelerate the training programme for the civil police so as to ensure a smooth transition when the United Nations force departs.

The fourth and final field is the political transition. The European Union fully supports the process initiated by UNTAET to develop mechanisms for good governance, get the East Timorese more involved in decision-making and prepare them for democracy, after the organization of the elections planned for next year.

As for the transferring of competence that is now under way, the European Union would like to know Mr. Vieira de Mello's preliminary evaluation of the functioning of his coalition Government. What improvements might be possible? Do the donor countries and agencies have a role to play in this field?

The European Union believes that, in order for UNTAET's efforts to be successful, it is essential to maintain a climate of peace and stability in East Timor. In this context, the European Union recalls the request made by the Security Council on 3 August and considers it important that a special briefing on the military situation be held. The European Union would like in particular to have access to current information regarding the military needs of UNTAET, the consequences of the insecurity along the West Timor border, the effective distribution of resources in the territory in accordance with local security constraints, the tasks that have been effectively passed on to the military component of UNTAET, and the prospects for the further evolution of the Mission.

As I already stressed last month, the European Union believes that the conditions are now in place in East Timor to allow the Timorese to undertake the process for a solid and lasting national reconciliation. In this context it is essential that the international community show its commitment to support the rehabilitation and development of East Timor. The European Union will continue to assist the people of East Timor at this critical moment in the establishment of their nation.

The European Union is pleased by the excellent cooperation in East Timor between UNTAET and UNDP and the other specialized agencies and funds of the United Nations. It believes that the quality of this cooperation should, at the appropriate moment, facilitate the exchange of authority between the Transitional Administration and the Timorese Government. A peacekeeping operation cannot take the place of a long-term development programme.

UNTAET has benefited from significant assistance from the international community. The results achieved are considerable and deserve to be enthusiastically commended. However, as with any

peacekeeping operation, it is useful to continuously assess the costs and the adequacy of the means available for success. The European Union will naturally continue to pay attention to this aspect.

I would now like to mention on behalf of the European Union two points of particular concern to us and the entire Council. I refer to the activity of the militias and to the situation of the refugees in West Timor, which we are convinced could have very serious repercussions on the evolution of the political situation in East Timor and might place in jeopardy everything that the international community has achieved through UNTAET.

The European Union energetically condemns the activity of the militias in West Timor. It deplores in particular the cowardly murder on 6 September in Atambua of three UNHCR staff. The European Union urges the Indonesian authorities to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators of that aggression and to put an end to the destabilizing activity of the militias. The Union also calls upon them to guarantee the security of the refugees and of the humanitarian personnel in West Timor so that they may soon resume their work. In short, the European Union calls upon Indonesia to fully implement resolution 1319 (2000), adopted on 8 September.

The Union takes note of the initial steps taken by the Indonesian Government with a view to disarming and disbanding the militias. The European Union hopes that this action will continue and that steps will be taken to make sure that the disarmed militia members do not find any way of rearming.

The European Union recalls the urgent need to settle at the earliest possible opportunity the question of refugees in West Timor. Resuming humanitarian assistance in West Timor and resettling the refugees are essential prerequisites for lasting peace and stability. The Union is prepared, along with the international humanitarian organizations concerned to help the Indonesian Government resolve the problem of refugees in West Timor.

The Union would like to know what measures are planned by Indonesia, UNTAET and the UNHCR to bring about the return of refugees to East Timor or their resettlement in Indonesia. In this context, the European Union invites the Indonesian Government to confirm that it agrees to the forthcoming visit of a Security Council mission to accompany efforts at the national level to implement resolution 1319 (2000).

The transitional period in East Timor is at a crucial juncture. The United Nations mission must, with the East Timorese, pursue the construction of a new democratic, independent State, fully integrated within the region and living in peace with all its neighbours.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Satoh (Japan): As we recall the devastation in East Timor a year ago, we realize how much has been achieved since then. Considerable progress has been made in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of East Timor, and preparations for its independence have come a long way. We commend the efforts of the staff of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), under the able leadership of Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, particularly in light of the difficult conditions under which they have had to work.

The situation surrounding East Timor, however, is at a critical juncture. The increased militia activities have claimed the lives of several UNTAET peacekeeping personnel, who have tirelessly dedicated themselves to ensuring security in East Timor. The brutal and appalling murder on 6 September of the three staff members of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Atambua has forced the UNHCR to suspend its humanitarian activities and evacuate its personnel from West Timor.

The task of nation building in East Timor, daunting in itself, must not be undermined by militia incursions. Urgent action is needed to restore law and order in West Timor and to address the plight of refugees, who are no longer receiving assistance from international agencies. The key task in addressing all these problems, as I have stated on previous occasions, is the elimination of violent militia activities, in both East Timor and West Timor. To this end, the militias must be disarmed and disbanded in West Timor, and the perpetrators of the heinous murder of the UNHCR workers must be brought to justice. As is made clear in

resolution 1319 (2000), only the Government of Indonesia is in a position to effectively address the situation.

Japan therefore welcomes the ongoing, determined efforts of the Indonesian Government to disarm the militias. While we understand the complexity of this task, we sincerely hope that the Indonesian Government's effort will bring tangible results, which in turn will pave the way to a solution of the refugee problem.

At the same time, it is incumbent upon the international community to support the efforts of the Government of Indonesia, particularly in light of the domestic difficulties confronting the Government in its effort to advance democracy and to maintain its territorial integrity. In this context, the dispatch of a Security Council mission has to be well thought out. We trust that the Council will be able to send a mission in a manner that will facilitate a solution of the problems by the Indonesian Government.

The refugee programme also requires intensified efforts. More than 150,000 refugees have returned to East Timor, thanks to the efforts of the UNHCR and the Indonesian Government. But in recent months repatriation has come to a halt. We therefore welcome the Indonesian Government's commitment to formulate and implement a comprehensive plan of action, in close consultation with the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). I would like to stress that the plan must be definitive and viable. It must also be responsive to the will of each refugee. Its implementation will surely be an enormous and difficult undertaking, and if the Indonesian authorities are in need of assistance the international community should not hesitate to provide support. Japan for its part is ready to contribute to the best of its ability.

Humanitarian activities, particularly those of the UNHCR and the IOM, must be enabled to resume in West Timor. But this will only be possible if the safety of humanitarian workers is assured. Japan has always stressed the importance of protecting the lives of international personnel, but, most regrettably, it is the personnel working for humanitarian agencies such as the UNHCR that have been repeatedly exposed to danger. The recent death of a UNHCR staff member in Guinea reminds us again. We therefore urge the Government of Indonesia to make every effort to ensure the safety and security of the humanitarian workers. We also call on the United Nations agencies to take every possible precaution to secure the safety of their personnel.

Our efforts to overcome the immediate challenges that I have stressed today must all lead to our long-term goal of successful and peaceful nation-building in East Timor.

Most importantly, every effort should be made to promote national reconciliation through dialogue among East Timorese. The disarming and disbanding of the militias is a prerequisite for achieving this objective. We commend the efforts made by UNTAET to facilitate such dialogue and hope they will continue. The Indonesian Government too has an important role to play in such endeavours. International assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of East Timor also plays a vital role, since this reconciliation process will have a greater chance of success if the people of East Timor have brighter economic and social prospects.

Japan remains unchanged in its commitment to do its part in providing such assistance.

The President: *(spoke in French)*: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Brazil. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): I wish to thank you for organizing this open debate on the situation in East Timor. These meetings constitute important opportunities for the States not members of the Council to express their views.

I am glad to acknowledge the presence in this Chamber of Mr. Ramos-Horta, whose leadership was so decisive in the struggle for self-determination in East Timor. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and United Nations Transitional Administrator in East Timor, Sergio Vieira de Mello, for his briefing. Mr. Vieira de Mello's briefing could not be more eloquent in showing the roots of the problem of security in East Timor, and we agree with his analysis.

The event that took place at the beginning of this month in Atambua, West Timor, shocked each and every one of us. We should be asking ourselves whether there was anything that could have been done to prevent the violence. The killing of the humanitarian workers was not unpredictable. The deterioration of the security situation in the region had been repeatedly

reported to the Security Council. Other humanitarian workers had been beaten up and harassed before while fulfilling their duties in trying to alleviate the plight of refugees.

Against this backdrop, the sad acts perpetrated in Atambua were by no means a sudden outburst of rage. The assassination of Olivio Mendonça may have ignited the violence, but it was certainly not the main factor prompting the attack. The real root cause lies in the incapacity to disarm and disband the militia and arrest the extremists that are willing to undermine the ongoing construction of a democratic State in East Timor. The threats against United Nations personnel after last Sunday's weapon handover ceremony in Atambua are another symptom of the same.

Brazil supports the full and unconditional implementation of Security Council resolution 1319 (2000). We welcome that the special envoy of President Wahid, during his meeting with the Council last week, provided renewed assurances on the measures that are being taken to quell any further violence.

It is essential that Indonesia continue to do its utmost, with the cooperation of the international community, to disarm the militia, bring to justice those responsible for wrongdoing and protect the refugees. Brazil hopes that enforcement measures taken by Indonesia will be effective in disarming the militias and arresting their leaders.

We are particularly worried about the shortage of food, medicine and water in the refugee camps. Urgent action is needed to prevent an even bigger humanitarian catastrophe.

A durable solution for the refugees that remain in West Timor will require not only resources, but a great deal of political will to put resentment behind and to look ahead for a future of peace and prosperity for all Timorese. The independent State of East Timor will not be built on vengeance, violence or rebuttal. It has to be based on the rule of law, democratic participation and pluralism. In this new State there should be room for all those who are truly committed to democracy.

But it is also important to underline that true reconciliation cannot be attained unless East Timor comes to terms with its recent past. It is important not to let human rights abuses go unpunished, for there is no real reconciliation that can live with impunity.

Finally, in spite of all adversities, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, under the able leadership of Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, is doing a great job in assuring us that the conditions are being created for building a democratic and stable East Timor.

The President *(spoke in French)*: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Mozambique. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dos Santos (Mozambique): At the outset, I would like to join preceding speakers in extending to you, Mr. President, my sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September. We thank you for convening this meeting and affording us the opportunity to take part in the debate. We would like to extend our congratulations to your predecessor for the excellent manner in which he guided the work of the Security Council last month.

We warmly welcome the presence of the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CRNT) Vice President, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate in recognition of his role in the struggle for the self-determination of his people.

One year has elapsed since the people of East Timor, in a free and fair referendum, took the historic decision to vote for the independence of the territory. Since then, positive developments have taken place in the territory as a result of the determination of the people of East Timor to live in an environment of peace and stability and to begin the daunting process of national reconstruction. With the support of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the Timorese are engaged in the promotion of a national political dialogue which will contribute towards national reconciliation and create the basis for the future government of the territory.

We are equally pleased to note that there has been significant progress in the restoration of basic social services. We are encouraged by the reopening of a large number of schools despite the difficult conditions under which they operate. The public health care system is slowly recovering, with the support of the United Nations, donor countries and non-governmental organizations.

We believe that the establishment of the transitional administration will go a long way in constantly improving the living conditions of the people as well as in laying the foundations for an independent East Timor.

We are gravely concerned over the continued violence and destabilizing activities of the armed militias, violating East Timor borders, attacking United Nations peacekeepers and seriously undermining the repatriation of more than 100,000 refugees. The recent attack by the militia against the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees office in Atambua, which resulted in the murder of three international workers and the destruction of the office, is a clear demonstration of the violent acts perpetrated by the militias.

While paying homage to those brave international workers who chose to care for and to aid the people of East Timor, we cannot accept the continuation of such acts of violence, which create an environment of instability. We would like to appeal to the Government of Indonesia to take all necessary measures to stop these activities by the militias. This should be done with a great sense of urgency, in order to alleviate the suffering of the East Timorese people and to allow international workers to assist them. We note the information that the Government of Indonesia has initiated the process of disarming the militias. We hope this process will proceed speedily and effectively and will culminate in the disbanding of these forces of instability.

We register our profound gratitude and appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Transitional Administrator of East Timor, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, not only for his important report today, but also for his relentless efforts and dedication to the cause of peace and stability in East Timor. Under his leadership, UNTAET is doing a remarkable job in creating all the necessary conditions for the independence of the territory, so long awaited by the people of East Timor and the international community. As a Portuguese speaking country and as the current Chairman of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries, Mozambique will continue to make its modest contribution to UNTAET and the transitional process so that we can soon celebrate the entry of independent East Timor into our Community as the eighth member.

The President *(spoke in French)*: I thank the representative of Mozambique for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Powles (New Zealand): I thank you, Mr. President, for calling this open meeting of the Security Council and for the opportunity to address it.

As I have said previously in the Council, New Zealand has a direct interest in the security and the stability of East Timor. In fact, as I speak, my Prime Minister is in Dili and will shortly be meeting New Zealand troops stationed with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in Suai. And earlier this week New Zealand United Nations peacekeepers clashed yet again with heavily armed and aggressive militia units in the Suai district, just eight kilometres from the West Timor border.

We therefore strongly add our voice to calls by Council members and others for all the provisions of Security Council resolution 1319 (2000) to be implemented without delay by the Government of Indonesia. West Timor must be rid of dangerous militia units that have demonstrated to the world that they care little for the stability of either East or West Timor. By their presence and actions these militia units are preventing the international community from helping the Government of Indonesia provide much-needed assistance to East Timorese refugees. The longer these militias prevail in West Timor, the more unstable the border with East Timor will remain, a situation no one can tolerate. Militia members, and especially their leaders, who are suspects in the recent murders of United Nations civilian and military personnel and innocent civilians, must be arrested immediately and put on trial.

We say this not without understanding of the complexities facing the Government of President Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia. It is the New Zealand Government's wish to provide more assistance, but we can do so only when peace and security are restored to West Timor and international humanitarian personnel are able to return without fearing for their lives. We therefore call again for the earliest dispatch of the Security Council mission to Indonesia and East Timor to help this serious situation.

Finally we wish to express our gratitude to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, and all UNTAET staff for their ongoing dedication to the preparation of East Timor for independence. New Zealand will continue to provide support to the East Timorese people and UNTAET as East Timor's journey to nationhood continues.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of New Zealand for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Australia. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Ms. Wensley (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, for arranging this open meeting of the Council, which has given non-Council members and others whose interests are vitally and directly engaged in these matters, such as the very welcome José Ramos-Horta, the opportunity not only to hear directly from the Secretary-General's Special Representative, but also to hear the views of all Council members in what I might describe as an unfiltered and unabbreviated fashion.

Through you, Mr. President, I would also like to thank Mr. Vieira de Mello for his candid and, indeed, compelling briefing. My Government values greatly the progress which has taken place under his leadership as the Transitional Administrator in East Timor. We congratulate him and all members of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) most warmly on their continuing and effective management of the transition process, despite the many continuing challenges to their work.

We also want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to, in addition to the UNTAET team on the ground in East Timor, all those Secretariat officials at United Nations Headquarters who support UNTAET activities from this end. They have many competing pressures and demands to deal with. Yet they continue to handle their responsibilities very effectively, showing real commitment and dedication to making this unique United Nations operation succeed.

This open meeting obviously provides a timely opportunity for members of the Council and other members of the international community to voice their continuing concerns about the security situation in both East Timor and West Timor. We continue to place a high priority on the emergence of a future independent East Timor which is stable, democratic and secure and which has good relations with Indonesia and with its neighbouring region. The situation in West Timor is of deep concern to Australia because it continues to undermine progress towards all these goals.

My Government is extremely concerned by the ongoing militia activity and the obvious deterioration in the security situation in West Timor since the last open debate in the Security Council. We condemn the militia attacks which resulted in the deaths of three staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Atambua in early September. My Government conveys its sincere condolences to the Governments and the families so sadly affected. We look to the Government of Indonesia to ensure that the perpetrators are brought swiftly to justice. Australia strongly supports Security Council resolution 1319 (2999) of 8 September, and we look forward not only to its early, but to its full implementation.

We have welcomed the Indonesian Government's undertakings to resolve the security problems in West Timor and, in particular, the timetable that it set out for disarming the militia. We note that Indonesia is in the process of working through this timetable, and we recognize that the process still has some way to go before it is fully implemented.

In this context, however, reports of militia members continuing to act with impunity during implementation of the process that Indonesia has laid out, as in the events which followed the disarmament ceremony in Atambua on 24 September, are, to say the least, extremely disturbing. Recent incidents of militia contact with the UNTAET peacekeeping operation in East Timor in recent days also underline the need for further action. More needs to be done if the disarmament process is to succeed. Specifically, there are a number of steps which my Government believes need to be taken for this process to be successful. They include the permanent surrender — voluntary or forced — of all weapons by militia, the arrest and trial of suspects in the UNHCR staff killings, the arrest of key militia members, and the disbanding of the militias.

It is incumbent on the Indonesian authorities, in particular the Indonesian Military Forces (TNI) and the police, to take whatever steps are necessary to deliver

on Indonesia's undertakings to the Security Council. Australia and, as has been made abundantly clear by the speakers who preceded me in this debate, the international community are closely watching what concrete steps are being taken on the ground, and we look forward to the achievement of tangible results.

Resolving the militia problem in West Timor is clearly a matter of importance not only to the international community, not only to East Timor and not only to the East Timorese refugees remaining in camps, but to Indonesia itself. The activities of the militias in West Timor are adversely affecting Indonesia's internal security and are having a negative impact on international perceptions.

Ultimately, resolving the security problem in West Timor will be critical for resolving the refugee situation there. Australia reiterates the importance of Indonesia providing effective security to ensure that there is no militia intimidation, that there is unimpeded access to camps for UNHCR and that there is a credible registration process. The international community has already indicated its willingness to provide assistance in implementing Indonesia's proposal to close the refugee camps. However, provision of effective security by Indonesia remains an essential prerequisite for us to proceed with such assistance, and only Indonesia can ensure this.

Even as we are concentrating on this problem of the militias, we all need, as the Permanent Representative of Canada reminded the Council, to keep our focus on the situation of the refugees now, without the presence or the protection of UNHCR or other international personnel. At this very critical time, it is also important that local West Timorese authorities take effective measures to ensure the well-being of refugees, including through effective distribution of food supplies and the other necessities that were mentioned by the Permanent Representative of Brazil.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Australia for the kind words she addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September. My congratulations go also to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Malaysia, on his skilful stewardship of the Council's activities last month. Allow me to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, for his briefing on the situation in East Timor.

Ever since the New York agreement of May 1999 and the holding of the popular consultation of 30 August 1999, we have borne witness to a remarkable transformation of the question of East Timor. Indeed, Indonesia's new democratically elected Government led by President Abdurrahman Wahid, immediately after assuming official responsibility, honoured the decision of the East Timorese people. In that regard, it should be noted that the letter dated 25 October 1999 from President Wahid to the Secretary-General conveyed the decision of the People's Consultative Assembly on arrangements for the transfer of authority. Despite the sincere and concerted efforts of my Government over the past year, the Atambua incident of 6 September 2000 has regrettably brought to the forefront residual problems, including that regarding the refugees in West Timor, which have become formidable challenges for all parties concerned.

In that regard, my delegation would like to reiterate its decision on the need for a comprehensive resolution of the remaining problems relating to this item, which can be achieved only through the adoption of bold measures on four main questions. These would involve, first, an investigation of the Atambua incident of 6 September 2000 and bringing the perpetrators to justice; secondly, disarming the militias; thirdly, reaching a comprehensive solution of the problem of East Timorese refugees; and finally, promoting reconciliation among the East Timorese.

With regard to the investigation of the Atambua incident of 6 September 2000 and to bringing the perpetrators to justice, the Indonesian Government has accorded priority to handling this matter. Investigations by the relevant authorities into the killing of the three members of the staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and into the murder of Olivio Mendosa Moruk are continuing. As to the former, a suspect by the name of Sisto Pereira has been arrested and is being questioned. Almost a month after the occurrence of that tragic incident, our outrage has not abated. My delegation is constrained to point out that in the emotionally charged

environment caused by the killing of a militia leader on 5 September 2000, police officials on duty had asked all UNHCR personnel to vacate the office under their protection. Of those 13 personnel, 10 complied with that request and were escorted to safety, while three UNHCR staff members chose to remain and hence could not be saved.

On the question of disarming the militias, the Indonesian Government has adopted a two-step approach. The first step laid out a specific time-frame for the militias to surrender their weapons voluntarily: by 24 September 2000. On that date, in a ceremony witnessed by the Vice-President, Megawati Sukarnoputri, and other high-ranking Indonesian officials, as well as by UNTAET officials, militia members surrendered the weapons in their possession. This involved the voluntary handover of 888 home-assembled weapons, 34 standard weapons, four grenades and 1,000 rounds of ammunition.

My delegation would like to stress that the process of disarming the militia did not begin just on 23 September 2000, but has been under way since December 1999, resulting in the seizure of 817 firearms, consisting of 214 standard weapons and 603 home-assembled weapons, and 19,926 rounds of ammunition and 66 grenades. Mindful of the complexity of this process, and to ensure that it was conducted in an orderly, peaceful and thorough manner, the Indonesian Government extended the period from 24 September to 27 September 2000. Since then, an additional 215 weapons, including four units of M-16s and 13 grenades, and 1,900 rounds of ammunition, have been surrendered.

In the light of those facts, Indonesia considers certain comments with regard to the handover of weapons on 21 September to be most unfortunate and ill-advised, as they reflect a failure to fully appreciate the prevailing realities of the disarmament process. Every single one of those weapons could have maimed, injured or killed innocent civilians. Any shortcomings in the handover ceremony should not, and cannot, detract from the basic, indisputable fact that a large quantity of weapons were surrendered to the police on that day and that, accordingly, security in the refugees camps and in Atambua generally has been enhanced. Moreover, the comments indicate an acute inability to recognize the political significance of the occasions on which the individuals concerned have opted to pursue their legitimate aspirations through peaceful means by renouncing violence.

Indonesia also takes strong exception to any suggestion that the scuffle that broke out following the handover ceremony testifies to the inability of the Indonesian police to maintain order. On the contrary, despite the potentially volatile situation, the police were able to quickly drive the excitable crowd out of the police compound and safeguard the surrendered weapons — those that were briefly retrieved were quickly surrendered to the local military commander — and protect the UNTAET personnel who were in the compound at the time, and provide them with the necessary military escort for their journey back to Monta Ain en route to Dili.

Indeed, the commotion following the handover ceremony confirmed the Indonesian Government's forewarning that the disarmament would be fraught with challenges. This was not a unique local phenomenon; it is, in fact, inherent in any effort to disarm individuals or groups bent on retaining their weapons. It is for these reasons that the emphasis was first placed on persuasive matters.

Furthermore, commencing on 27 September, the sweeping operation — the second step — was carried out by a joint police and Indonesian armed forces (TNI) team to persuade people to hand over, or to forcibly confiscate, weapons which are still at large. Although these operations are continuing, they are not without risk, not least to the ordinary people, whose safety and security are paramount. Under these circumstances, we should not second-guess those in the field with intimate knowledge of the tasks at hand, pontificate or make endless calls for Indonesia to disarm and disband the militias. Rather, the international community should issue unmistakable words of encouragement to those who are, at this very important moment, doing their level best to carry out these important tasks.

Understandably, the commencement on 27 September of the phase of the forcible confiscation of weapons generated a fair degree of anxiety in Atambua because of wary anticipation or rumours of possible violence and public disorder. It is gratifying to note that such assumptions have been largely unfounded. The awesome display of force by the Indonesian police had its intended deterrent effect on would-be trouble makers and in reassuring the general public of their

safety and security. Just as important, the Indonesian police and the TNI have continued to work closely with the local district authority and local community and religious leaders in promoting calm, resulting in the maintenance of general law and order in Atambua.

The issue of refugees almost always creates a dilemma for the international community, especially with its many and multifaceted problems. The question of East Timorese refugees in no exception. More than one year on, the presence of East Timorese refugees in West Timor is proving to be more of a financial burden with each passing day. Indonesia has done far more than its fair share in extending assistance to them. Urgent steps have been implemented to take over the task of providing humanitarian emergency relief due to the departure of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other relevant humanitarian agencies. On 24 September, the Vice-President personally oversaw the provision of such assistance in Atambua. Pivotal in this field has been the role of the provincial government, which since 10 September, has initiated phase I of the relief operation, namely, the distribution of 1,040 tons of rice.

During phase II, begun on 27 September and continuing until 6 October, 918 tons of rice are to be distributed, with additional cash in the amount of 1,500 rupiahs per person per day for meals. Approximately 130,000 refugees multiplied by 1,500 will amount to 1.95 billion rupiahs.

Commencing on 6 October, assistance will be channelled through the affected districts. Hence, Indonesia is not shirking its responsibilities to the East Timorese refugees. But we believe that that this is a shared responsibility. The United Nations, including the Security Council, has an important role to play to extend urgently needed assistance at this critical hour of need. In order to alleviate the plight of the refugees, much more is needed than mere rhetoric and platitudes, which need to be reinforced by concrete plans for action. As always, my Government stands ready to work with the United Nations in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect to resolve the outstanding problems.

My Government has consistently pointed out the urgent need to promote the reconciliation of the East Timorese people of all political persuasions, which the French Ambassador and other speakers have mentioned. It is hoped that UNTAET will ensure that there is an effort to promote an all-inclusive reconciliation process. It is regrettable that little progress has been achieved so far on this track. Thus, while calls for disarmament are justifiably made to the pro-integration side, they should be equally applicable to FALINTIL if a process of genuine reconciliation is to begin. Merely disarming one side would only provide a short interval of peace, as feelings of deep resentment and anger would continue to fester and a lasting peace would prove elusive.

My Government has therefore offered a hand of cooperation to UNTAET to facilitate such reconciliation, and it stands ready to work towards that end. In this regard, it is pertinent to note that Indonesia initiated the meeting that took place in Denpasar on 14 September 2000, which was attended by UNTAET, the leaders of CNRT and UNTAS.

As East Timor moves further along the path to independence, it is of the utmost importance that the pro-integration group, which constitutes 21.5 per cent of its population, be encouraged to participate in its nation-building endeavour, as it has the same rights and responsibilities as the pro-independence supporters. These efforts should be pursued in earnest, as they offer the only viable path to replacing decades of mistrust and enmity with a prosperous future built on trust and amity. Only then can its people relegate this conflict to the past and look forward to opening a new chapter in their lives, characterized by peace, harmony and stability.

In an effort to ensure that the Council is kept apprised of ongoing developments, the Special Envoy of Indonesia was dispatched to brief its member States on the comprehensive plan of action to disarm the militias and on the other important measures that it had already undertaken. As a follow-up, the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, Mr. Alwi Shihab, will return to New York on 12 October 2000 to brief the Security Council and the Secretary-General on the progress made by the Indonesian Government in implementing Security Council resolution 1319 (2000). These endeavours by my Government reflect its sincerity and commitment to ensure an open channel of communication and information between Indonesia and the United Nations on the unfolding situation.

The President *(spoke in French)*: I thank the representative of Indonesia for the kinds words he addressed to me.

I shall now give the floor to Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello to respond to the comments and questions raised.

Mr. Vieira de Mello: First of all, allow me to thank all those who took the floor for their strong expressions of support, not just for the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) but for the East Timorese at large in this difficult transition to independence.

The representative of Malaysia, Ambassador Hasmy, encouraged us to forge more bilateral ties and arrangements with the Republic of Indonesia. He is right, and, as he knows, in the very early stages we launched a process of bilateral negotiations with Indonesia, which was reinforced, during the visit of President Wahid to Dili on 29 February, by the signing of a joint communiqué between Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab and myself which charted the future of those bilateral negotiations. Those negotiations continue and, I must say, have made a great deal of progress in a number of important areas in terms of creating the framework for future relations between East Timor and its main partner, Indonesia.

The joint border agreement that we signed in Denpasar on 14 September is one such example. In fact, the suggestion for the establishment of a Joint Border Committee came from us in March, in discussions both in Kupang and later in Jakarta with the then Minister of Defence, Juwono Sudarsono, as well as the Commander of the ninth military region, General Kiki Syahnakri. I am delighted that the document is signed, because it is very broad. It covers not only security but a number of other trade and cross-border types of contacts between the Indonesian Government and UNTAET; the exploitation of natural resources, including water, on both sides of the border; veterinary concerns; and so on. It is an all-encompassing document which, I am sure, will lead to substantial improvement in the relations between East Timor and West Timor in particular.

Our philosophy, I want to reassure Ambassador Hasmy, has not changed and cannot change. Relations of confidence, partnership and cooperation are vital in the long term for East Timor, and I know that President Wahid of Indonesia and his Government share that view.

I am also very happy that there has been unanimous recognition here that dealing with the question of militias, including, I must underline once again, the arrest of their criminal commanders, is the central issue before us. I have also pointed out to Coordinating Minister Yudhoyono that, as far as disarmament is concerned, we are particularly interested in the confiscation and destruction — preferably public destruction — of weapons such as G3s, SKS rifles, M-16s, rocket launchers, grenades and ammunition for these, rather than homemade weapons.

Having listened to the representative of Indonesia a while ago, I fear that the message I tried to convey earlier has not been fully apprehended — that is, that the militia must be clearly separated, in theory and in practice, from well-meaning pro-integration political leaders, with whom we have always been open to discussions and with whom we shall remain open to re-establish dialogue. I provided the Coordinating Minister, in our meetings in Jakarta and in Denpasar - the President of the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), Xanana Gusmão, was present at one of those meetings — with a long list of examples of efforts made by the CNRT leadership, by the FALINTIL commander and by us — including your obedient servant — in order to establish a constructive dialogue with those political leaders, to no avail so far.

I have given the example of a meeting to which I invited the leader of UNTAS, Mr. Domingo Soares. He chairs that umbrella organization of pro-autonomy movements. I invited him to my hotel in Jakarta in late March and handed over to him my personal response to a letter he had addressed to me raising many questions about the electoral process last year, the process that led to the popular consultation. We had a very constructive, in fact very cordial, meeting with him and with seven of his senior colleagues. He promised that he would share the contents of my letter with other UNTAS leaders who were not present in Jakarta and that he would come back to me with proposals on the next steps for this dialogue leading to lasting reconciliation between the East Timorese. I have been waiting every since for that call, and, believe me, I have tried to provoke that call by requesting my colleagues to re-establish contact with him and telling him that we were waiting for his proposals, as was the presidency of the CNRT. This is only one of the many examples that I could give here, but I do not want to

bore the Council with a detailed catalogue of those initiatives.

Regarding the Defence Force, I am grateful for the broad support that I have heard from those who addressed this question for the proposed course of action and for the convening of a meeting of interested countries, which, with the support of the Council and that of the Secretary-General, I now intend to convene later in the month of October or in early November. I thank Council members also for the expressions of concrete support from several speakers in preparation for that meeting.

Let me also state, commenting on something that Ambassador Wibisono just said, that I do not believe it is possible to establish a symmetry between the FALINTIL and the militia. I have briefed the Council on the future of the FALINTIL. This was at the core of the problem we faced earlier this year — the problem that led the United Kingdom to propose an independent study, which was carried out by the Centre for Defence Studies of King's College in London. That study, as we know, focused not only on the future defence force for East Timor, but also on the role that the FALINTIL could play in the creation of that defence force. I have alluded to this in the past. I alluded to it again this afternoon. It is something on which I also briefed the Coordinating Minister for Political, Social and Security Affairs of Indonesia on Monday of last week in Djakarta. So I think the future of the FALINTIL is clear in everybody's minds. I am afraid that that is not yet the case as regards the militia.

I also take note of the remark by Ambassador van Walsum and his reference to the likely need for an international force to remain in place and continue to provide for East Timor's security until the Timorese are able to fend for themselves. I would add that this will be necessary not just in the security area, but in a number of other capacity-building areas where obviously we shall not have attained a benchmark by the time East Timor accedes to full independence.

In response to Ambassador Hasmy's question on the downsizing of the military component of UNTAET I was a strong supporter of the gradual downsizing of our military component. But I have recommended that the downsizing be suspended — and the Secretary-General agrees with that recommendation — until the security situation improves, until it is clear to the Council and to us that the downsizing can resume without putting in danger all that we are trying to achieve on the basis of the mandate that the Council entrusted to us.

The representative of Namibia asked me whether there was a contingency plan for the possible sudden influx of refugees from West Timor, and Ambassador Durrant of Jamaica noted that such a contingency plan was in place. We have established a joint operation centre at the headquarters of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Dili. I visited this centre last Saturday and was briefed about the concept of operations, as it were, in the event that we were to be faced with a large-scale influx. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) — the Office for which I am responsible here in New York — will be entrusted, as is normal, with the coordination of the humanitarian agencies, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, which will have an important role to play should such an influx occur. The military component of UNTAET, our police, as well as other civilian components of the Transitional Administration and, needless to say, the East Timorese partners are represented in that mechanism, which is now prepared for an influx of up to 100,000 refugees.

Council members know that our estimates vary. The United Nations believes that there remain about 100,000 to 120,000 refugees; the Indonesian Government believes that the figures is 130,000. In fact, nobody really knows, because we were never able to carry out a thorough registration of the refugee population. But we are ready on the East Timorese side to receive as many as 100,000, although we do not believe that many are likely to voluntarily go back. We have several transit centres established, and sufficient goods and facilities are available to care for this fairly large number of people — with the hope that this will never materialize and that we will, on the contrary, be able to carry out the return of these people in accordance with the comprehensive plan of action put forward by Foreign Minister Shihab.

No one wishes more than the East Timorese and ourselves to see this question of the refugees resolved — including the local settlement or resettlement in Indonesia of those who wish to remain there, and who are perfectly entitled to make that choice. The international community, as I have stated many times before, must provide Indonesia with the

necessary support for that part of the equation to be effectively addressed.

I repeat that the comprehensive plan of action of the Indonesian Government is viable, and we support it. UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration and other humanitarian agencies can proceed with the registration of the refugees, and with their return or settlement in Indonesia, in close partnership with the Indonesian Government, and UNTAET will fully support that process. In fact, as we all know, the problem could have been solved long ago had the militia been removed from these refugee settlements and had humanitarian agencies been allowed to do their job and determine freely who wishes to return and who wishes to remain.

Ambassador van Walsum of the Netherlands asked me how much progress had been achieved in involving the East Timorese, or rather whether the East Timorese felt they had ownership of the process. I wish that my friend and partner, José Ramos-Horta — who is present and whose cooperation with us and support for UNTAET I wish to salute and pay tribute to — could respond, because this is a question that the Timorese might be in a better position to answer.

Let me simply say that the following are significant steps in that direction: the cabinet structure — the fact that we will soon be appointing deputy cabinet members in all the four cabinet pillars, not only in the four that are currently the responsibility of the East Timorese; the appointment of a Timorese inspector general of the Transitional Administration; the appointment in the coming days of a person of East Timorese origin who will be in charge of planning, development, environment and gender issues, also as part of the Transitional Administration; the fact, as I have indicated, that I have just appointed 13 district administrators and deputy district administrators; the fact that we have so far recruited 5,400 civil servants, out of the total of 10,000 approved as part of the first fiscal year, 2000-2001; the fact that I will soon be appointing the 33 members of the new national council, following broad consultations at the central and district level; and the fact that the judiciary is composed, in its vast majority, of Timorese judges, investigating judges, prosecutors and public defendants. Much more can still be done, and I can assure the Council that we will continue to consult with our Timorese partners to do as much as we can to implement the mandate that the Council has given us.

I keep saying that there is no better way of preparing the East Timorese for self-governance than through self-governance. So I can assure the Council that the Timorization process will continue and in fact be further accelerated.

(*spoke in French*)

Ambassador Levitte asked me my evaluation of the coalition Government and what improvements might be made to it. My evaluation is absolutely favourable. I am impressed by the sense of responsibility and commitment shown by the four Timorese members of our cabinet structure, and by the cohesion and harmony that exists among them and between them and us — the international side.

What improvements might be made? I would say that undoubtedly we should in the next few weeks make the coalition Government more representative than it is at present. We need to see an increasing affirmation of the diversity of the Timorese political force. It remains to be seen what will happen next, Mr. Ambassador.

(*spoke in English*)

The representative of Jamaica referred to assistance in the form of quick impact projects. She must have known she was touching on a subject very close to my heart. I can assure that through the UNTAET fund and other, smaller OCHA and UNHCR funds, as well as through bilateral contributions made since late last year, these quick impact projects are the ones that perhaps provided the East Timorese population with the most visible, the most immediate confirmation of international solidarity. I regret to say that all those funds are now practically exhausted and that all that we have to rely upon is the World Bank-funded community empowerment project, which has taken over the funding of this type of project. This is certainly one of the big lessons of this operation. We should in the future provide missions of this kind, as we have seen in the past, with sufficient funds to launch these kinds of projects across the entire country.

I believe I have covered most of the questions that were put to me.

(*spoke in French*)

Ambassador Levitte raised a question on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries. He referred to the budget for the first fiscal year, 2000-

2001, which was adopted at the donors conference in Lisbon. I would like to say in that connection that the budget adopted, less than $60 million, which should have been enough to enable us to govern Timor and supply the Timorese population with the services that it so sorely needs, is one that I have often described as cruel. It is entirely inadequate. But we knew that we had to remain within the limits of the resources that the donor countries were willing to make available to us. The budget will not enable us to fund a number of activities that seem indispensable to us and that we are identifying as we discover the magnitude of the task that the Council has entrusted to us. I am afraid, and I wanted to inform the Council right away, that I will have to approach the donor countries with certain new needs at the donors conference in Brussels in early December. I thank Ambassador Levitte for having given me this opportunity to raise this very urgent problem because, on a daily basis, we discover new needs that are not covered by the first consolidated budget for the fiscal year 2000-2001.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay a heartfelt tribute to my friend Bernard Miyet. This afternoon's meeting is, I believe, the last one he will be attending as Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and I would like to tell him that his leadership over the last three and a half years in this very important task was of crucial importance in preserving the role of the Organization in peacekeeping and peacemaking. We know that this is not an easy task, in particular, in the implementation of the ambitious mandates we are given by the Council nowadays, the new generation of mandates of administration and governance, such as the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). I would like to express to him, on behalf of all my colleagues in UNTAET and on behalf of all the peacekeeping mission staff throughout the world, our warmest gratitude and our abiding friendship. We wish him the best in his new activities.

I thank you very much, Mr. President, for having invited me here today, for the opportunity to make this presentation today and for your guidance and support.

The President *(spoke in French)*: I thank Mr. Vieira de Mello for the clarifications and answers he has provided.

Before adjourning, I would like to discharge a duty of conscience and also to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Mr. Bernard Miyet, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

First of all, the duty of conscience: this is the last public meeting for the Security Council in the month of September, under the presidency of Mali. Before taking up the presidency on behalf of Mali, I did not think that the task of presiding over the Council would be cumbersome in the first half of the month in view of the general debate that was being held at the time in the General Assembly. However, recent developments in various situations throughout the world compelled us to break with tradition. The Security Council was thus required to be active during the general debate, and a number of meetings of experts were required. I am very grateful to all members for their understanding and cooperation.

The second half of the month has been very difficult. Members' support and cooperation continued, and I am very grateful. Additionally, our task was made much easier by the Secretariat, which gave us instructive presentations and good advice. I would particularly like to thank Mr. Stephanides and his team for their help and their reliability at all times.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank the interpreters and the translators, who worked very skilfully for long hours alongside the members of the Council.

Now I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Bernard Miyet on behalf of the members of the Council. His function as head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is now coming to an end, and his skills are required elsewhere. On behalf of the Council, I thank him for the great contribution he made to the work of the Secretariat and for the dedication with which he served to further the objectives of the United Nations. I wish him every success in his future endeavours.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.